

physiologic principles involved are freely discussed. A chapter on postoperative pulmonary complications cites experimental work by Churchill, Hilding, Beecher and others, in support of early postoperative activity. Circulatory, wound, and gastrointestinal complications are treated in short, separate sections, each with an ample bibliography. The chapter on surgical technique contains a number of commendable suggestions, although the author's enthusiasm for catgut is not shared by many surgeons. Stress is laid on muscle splitting and transverse incisions, which are justifiably recommended.

PROBLEMS IN ABNORMAL BEHAVIOUR. By Nathaniel Thornton. The Blakiston Company, Philadelphia, 1946. Price \$2.00.

This book, apparently directed to the layman, covers a most extensive field, from psychoanalysis to endocrinology. In spite of the necessarily superficial approach, it is not without some merit. Quite possibly the physician unfamiliar with present day thought in the field of human behavior might profit from its perusal, on the assumption that he would possess sufficient critical faculties to discern the not infrequent errors, which may best be illustrated by the following example. On page 217, speaking of epilepsy, it is stated, "If there be any evidence of its resting on an organic foundation (for example, brain tumor or general paresis), then we speak of idiopathic epilepsy. Where no organic basis is discoverable, we speak of symptomatic epilepsy." The book is certainly not one to recommend to patients, particularly those suffering from nervous disease. For the public at large, although it might be capable of satisfying a certain morbid curiosity regarding mental disease, it would contribute little to a sympathetic understanding of the subject.

ACIDOSIS. CLINICAL ASPECTS AND TREATMENT WITH ISOTONIC SODIUM BICARBONATE SOLUTION. By Esben Kirk, M.D., Chief Physician, Medical Service, Holstebro District Hospital, Holstebro, Denmark. Copyright by Einar Munksgaard. Translated by Miss Annie I. Fausboll, M.A., and the Author. Einar Munksgaard, Publisher, Copenhagen, 1946. Price: dan. cr. 18.—

"The object of the present book is to spread the knowledge of acidosis and of the treatment of this often dangerous complication with isotonic sodium bicarbonate solution, a therapy which the author had the pleasure of introducing into Denmark in 1934." This statement from the preface fairly sums up the contents of the book, written by a former student of Van Slyke. Clinical forms of acidosis are tabulated and then illustrated by 54 rather generous case reports. A chapter is given to the analytical technique for the determination of the bicarbonate content of the plasma.

The author points out that it was another Dane, S. P. L. Sorensen, at whose suggestion the sign pH was adopted as an expression of the hydrogen ion concentration. The latter is ignored, except for a foot-note, by the definition of "acidosis in a clinical sense . . . as a condition in which the bicarbonate content of the plasma is reduced." Thus the respiratory alkalosis following salicylates arbitrarily becomes a state of acidosis.

There is an interesting account of the earliest use of injections of alkaline solutions, against the cholera in the English epidemic of 1831-32. Otherwise, from an academic viewpoint, there should be little need for such a book in this country.

On the other hand, the author makes a strong case for the intravenous administration of isotonic (1.3 per cent) sodium bicarbonate solution in the therapy of acidosis. Certainly this is more direct and may at times be more beneficial than the current use of sodium lactate for the same purpose. Unfortunately, the former solution is not generally available commercially.

THE PRINCIPLES OF NEUROLOGICAL SURGERY. By Loyal Davis, M.S., M.D., Ph.D., D.Sc. (Hon.). Third Edition, Thoroughly Revised. With 193 Engravings, Containing 348 Illustrations and 5 Plates, 4 in Color. Lea & Febiger, Philadelphia, 1946. Price \$7.50.

A concise and well written reference book of conditions amenable to neurosurgical treatment. The author has been successful in affording a source of practical information for the benefit of those physicians, not specializing in neurology, who are interested in the proper selection of patients for surgical treatment. The rationale and results of operation are emphasized rather than the technical details of the procedure.

The chapter on oraniocerebral injuries should prove a valuable aid in the conservative management of patients with acute head injuries.

Attention is given to the problem of pain. An adequate discussion is included of the accepted surgical procedures employed, and the limitations of each method.

The chapter on the Sympathetic Nervous System is very complete, particularly from the historic aspect. However, the clinical portion of the discussion is not adequate with regard to the surgical treatment of essential hypertension. The newer thoracolumbar type of sympathectomy, which has proven more successful than previous methods, warrants more discussion. Undue emphasis is placed on thiocyanate therapy.

Neurosurgical conditions are encountered with increasing frequency in general practice as well as in many specialties, and this volume should prove invaluable in the diagnosis and proper disposition of patients with such conditions.

